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SECOND  
REMARKS  
UPON AN  
ESSAY  
CONCERNING  
Humane Understanding,

IN A  
LETTER address'd to the AUTHOR.

BEING A  
*Vindication of the First Remarks,*

AGAINST THE  
ANSWER of Mr. LOCK,

At the End of

HIS REPLY to the LORD BISHOP of  
WORCESTER.

*By 7 Burnet*

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REMARKS

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UPON AN  
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In a LETTER address'd to the Author.

SIR,

AT the End of your Reply to the Lord Bishop of Worcester, I have met with your Answer, as you are pleas'd to call it, to my short Remarks upon your *Essay*, and am very much surpriz'd to find it writ in such an angry Style, and with such undeserved and ill-grounded Reflections. I writ to you with Civility and Respect, and I dare appeal to any Gentleman, if there be any thing unbecoming or provoking

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in the Style or Expressions of my Letter. If you made a false Surmise to your self, that a Storm was coming, as you phrase it, and a Design hatching to run down your Book ; As there is no Storm, I'm sure, in my Letter, but every Line calm and peaceable, so I protest I never heard of any such Design, never had Communication with any, about the confuting or opposing your Book: And as to these Two short Papers of Remarks, 'Tis more than I know if any Person in the World (besides my self) knows me to be the Writer of them. So far was I from designing any thing by them but my own Satisfaction, and to know the true State of Your Principles, that I might the better judge of their Truth, and of their Consequences. And whereas you say, *If it was for my own Information, what need of putting my Doubts in Print?* I thought, that the best way, that your Answer might give Satisfaction to others (as well as to me) who probably might have the same or like Scruples. And as to your self, I thought I had done you a Kindness, by giving you an Opportunity of explaining or vindicating some of your Principles, which were likely, I thought, to fall under the Censure of Inquisitive Persons. Then, as to the Crime of concealing my Name, which is another thing objected,



objected, I think, of all Men I know, Mr. Lock had the least Reason to make that Criminal, He, who hath writ so many Books without putting his Name to them, and some in confutation of the Principles of other Men.

*Turpe est Cenfori, cum——*

But you have invented a strange Reason for my concealing my Name, with a black Accusation contain'd in it, In these Words: *I cannot* Answ. p. 3.  
*much blame him in another respect, for concealing his Name. For, I think, any one who appears amongst Christians, may be well asham'd of his Name, when he raises such a Doubt as this, viz. Whether an infinitely Powerful and Wise Being, be Veracious or no? unless Falshood be in such reputation with this Gentleman, that he concludes Lying to be no Mark of Weakness and Folly. This Insinuation is the more inexcusable, because to bring it in, you have misrepresented and perverted the Sense of the Author. The Question there is not, Whether God be Veracious? but, Whether, according to your Principles, he can be prov'd to be so? The Reflection which falls upon your Principles onely, you would have thrown upon God, and very unjustly suppose that the Remarker calls in question the Divine Veracity, whereas he onely calls in question the Truth of your Principles: which, I think, is a very different*

thing from the Divine Veracity. In the Pages you cite, the Remarker says, *Veracity*, according to *His Principles*, may be prov'd to belong to the Divine Nature, as being a *Perfection*; but tells you at the same time, that you make no use of that Argument, nor vouchsafe to give us any Account or Idea of *Perfection*, tho' you do of many other Terms and Notions of less importance. You may see by this, that *Falshood* and *Lying* (as your gross Words are) are not in reputation with this Gentleman, seeing he looks upon them as *Imperfections* inconsistent with the Divine Nature. Now let every impartial Reader judge, whether there is less of the Christian in the first Objection, or in the pretended Answer; and whether of these two Persons hath more reason to be ashamed. You add in the same Place, that you have more than once *spoke of the Goodness of God*, another Evidence of his Veracity. Be it so; But where have you prov'd the Divine Goodness? Or how can it be prov'd, from your Principles? The Question is not, as I told you before, Whether God be Good and Veracious, &c. nor whether you think so, (for I do not enter into your Thoughts) but onely, Whether you have prov'd these Attributes, or laid down any Principles by which they may be prov'd.

Next, you proceed to what concerns the *Ma-*  
*the-*

*thematical Demonstration of Morality*: where I desired to know how it could be founded on your Principles. In answer to this, you tell me, my Judgment does not seem of that Consequence, that any one should be in haste to gratifie my Impatience. Pag. 4.  
 Sir, I did not presume to desire to know the full Systems of your Morality, but the Basis upon which you would build it: And you having declar'd more than once, That from *Grounds and Principles* laid down in your Book, Morality might be *Mathematically demonstrated*, I thought it would give no offence to enquire which *Ground* or *Principle* you pitch upon for your Foundation. I thought, I say, That would have given no offence, especially seeing I was willing to suppose, That *twas* not the deficiency of your Principles, but my own short-sightedness, that made me at a loss. Remarks, P. 5  
 But however, if this Enquiry, how modestly soever propos'd, be look'd upon by you as presumptuous, I beg your Pardon, if that will satisfy at present; And we shall have occasion hereafter to speak more at large concerning the *Grounds of Morality*; where, tho' you be so reserv'd in declaring yours, I shall not be so in declaring mine.

After this, you make a Remark upon what I had said concerning the Knowledge of our Duty, and concerning the Grounds of the Di-

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Pag. 4.

vine Law : And you express it in these Words ; And since *he thinks the illiterate part of Mankind (which is the greatest) must have a more compendious way to know their Duty, than by long Deductions, (you should have said, long and obscure Deductions, if you had truly taken the Words of the Author) He may do well to consider, whether it were for their sakes he publish'd this Question, viz. What is the Reason and Ground of the Divine Law?* I suppose this is mentioned as containing something inconsistent or incongruous ; but I see no such thing in the Words cited. May not the illiterate part of Mankind know their Duty by Natural Conscience, and the Revealed Law of God, and yet that *Divine Law have a Reason or Ground?* I can see no interfering in this, nor any Incongruity.

Pag. 5.

But this is a gentle Reprimand or (intended) Reflexion upon me, in comparison of the next, which flies as high as the imputation of *Malice and Ignorance*; in these Words : *A Man that insinuates, as he does, as if I held, that the distinction of Vertue and Vice was to be picked up by our Eyes, our Ears, or our Nostrils, shews so much Ignorance, or so much Malice, that he deserves no other Answer but Pity. Malice and Ignorance!* These are such vulgar Topicks of Railing amongst angry and ill-bred Writers, that methinks

thinks it should be below the Genius of a Gentleman and a Philosopher, to make use of them. Do you find these hard Words in the Writing you criticize? I know that is no Rule to you; but however, the World will consider these things (whether you will or no) to judge of the Temper of a Person, who treats another at this rate, that us'd him with Respect, and in civil Language. But let us consider the Matter it self.

You call this an *Insinuation* of mine, not a thing directly exprest; and you have reason for this diminution of it: But this also will make it more difficult to find out the particular Passage you understand here. The first Passage in the Paragraph to which I suppose you refer, is this: *Your general Principle of picking up all our Knowledge from our Five Senses, I confess, does not sit easily in my Thoughts, tho' you join Reflexion to help us.* Now if this be the Sentence you mean, surely you ought not to have omitted *Reflexion*, and to have charg'd this only upon the Five Senses, which you see I do not. There is another Sentence in the same Paragraph, which possibly you may refer to; and 'tis this: *As to Morality, we think the great Foundation of it is, The Distinction of Good and Evil, Vertue and Vice, Turpis & Honesti, as they*  
are

are usually call'd: and I do not find that my Eyes, Ears, Nostrils, or any other outward Sense, make any Distinction of these Things, as they do of Sounds, Colours, Scents, and other outward Objects; nor from any Idea taken in from them or from their Reports, am I conscious that I do or can conclude, that there is such a Distinction in the Nature of Things. In these two Passages I thought I had taken in enough to comprehend your Sensation and Reflexion, which you make the Principles of all our Knowledge, Natural or Moral, and consequently of the Distinction of Good and Evil, Vertue and Vice. But we shall see further into this Matter, and into your Sense, when you have further explain'd your Moral Notions, and let us see what you make *Vertue and Vice*, Good and Evil to be, according to your way.

But I must not forget to speak a few Words to the Charge it self, *Malice and Ignorance*. Malice is against a Person: Now God knows, I never had either Malice or Envy against your Person: And whosoever reads that Paper of Remarks, I believe, will think so; for 'tis writ in a courteous Style, and with favourable Expressions to you, from first to last. As to the Imputation of *Ignorance*, I am not so much concern'd to clear my self in that Point. If it be my Ignorance in general that you pity, I acknowledge



acknowledge your Kindness, and own your Pity well plac'd: But if it be my Ignorance of your Principles that you pity, as it seems to be, That may be a Weakness in me, I confess, but I hope no mortal Sin, nor any thing that requires much pity. But however, if you pity my Ignorance of your Principles, and yet will not instruct me in them, nor help me when I beg your Charity, that Pity is but a Mock-pity, and deserves no Thanks.

Now we come to the last Head of Inquiries you are pleas'd to take notice of, *The Immortality* Pag. 5, 6. *of the Soul.* And for a Proof of this, you refer me (whether ludicrously and sarcastically, or no, you best know) to the Lord Bishop of Worcester's Arguments, taken from your Principles. Then you add, *But if that will not serve his turn, I will tell him a Principle of mine that will clear it to him; and that is, The Revelation of Life and Immortality by Jesus Christ through the Gospel.* I write it *Immortality*, for so I know it was intended; tho', by an unlucky slip of the Press, 'tis printed there *Immorality.* The Revelation of the Gospel is no doubt an happy Confirmation of the Immortality of the Soul; but we are speaking of Proofs to be made by the Light of Nature, and particularly by the Principles of Humane Understanding, as you have

represented them. And before you make use of Revelation in this Point, you should resolve the other Point objected to you, viz. How you can prove the Truth of *Revealed Religion*, according to your Principles.

Sir, I have now done with your Answer, as you call it; but I can find neither Answer nor Explication in it to those Doubts I proposed. You may have some particular Reasons for that, which you best know: But I know no good Reason you can have for writing in such a snappish and peevish way. If you affect the Character of a Captious Disputant, I do not envy it you, I think you have taken the ready way to gain it, by your way of Writing, both here and elsewhere. If you have been so treated by other Pens, as to make you angry and out of humour, you ought not to take your Revenge, or ease your Spleen upon an in-offensive Pen: And you will be less pitied, when roughly handled by others, if you treat them rudely that treated you civilly. There is nothing, I'm sure, in my Words or Expressions that could offend you: It must be in the Sense, by touching, it may be, upon some tender Parts of your Essay, that would not bear pressing without giving Pain. If you concluded with your self, that the Writer of those Remarks

marks was some mean contemptible Thing, with whom you were not bound to observe the Measures of common Civility ; yet methinks, even in that Case, it had been better to have wholly neglected a Person of whom you had such an Idea, than to have given an Answer without giving any Satisfaction to his Doubts, or any Vindication of your Principles.

As to the *Storm* you speak of, preparing against you, I know nothing of it, as I told you before ; yet I can blame none that desire such Principles of *Humane Understanding* as may give them Proofs and Security against such a System as this, Cogitant Matter, a Mortal Soul, a Manichean God (or a God without Moral Attributes,) and an Arbitrary Law of Good and Evil. How far your Principles are concern'd in these Things, or lead to Scepticism in these and other material Points, is left to your Consideration. This however I know, The ready way to prevent any such *Storm*, is to give such a plain Explication of your Principles, without Art or Chicane, as may cure and remove any Fears of this Nature.

After all, notwithstanding this imperfect and angry Answer, I will not be discourag'd from soliciting once more a further Explication of your Principles upon the Three grand Points,



*The Immortality of the Soul, Natural Religion, and Reveal'd Religion.* And whereas you seem to say, Those that do not like your Principles, or think them false or defective, let them find out better : We cannot tell how good or how bad, how full or defective your Principles are, till we know the true State of them, and their Consequences, in reference to Moral Things : And for that reason we desire a further Explanation of them upon those Heads.

I am apt to believe, many of your Readers, if not the generality, do not so far understand your Principles, as to see what Consequences they draw after them ; and possibly you did not reflect upon it your self. Your Readers may easily be amus'd in a Multitude of Names and Notions, and Signs of Notions : They're led into a Wood of *Idea's* (Simple and Complex, and Complex-collective ; Absolute, Relative, Real, or Phantastical, &c.) and there they are lost ; pleasantly indeed, amongst Lights and Shades, and many pretty Landskips ; but they know not where they are, nor see to the end of the Wood. You know what Philosophers (Ancient or Modern) your Principles are said to imitate ; but I do not desire to make use of Names, one way or other, but to argue every thing fairly and upon the square, as far  
as

as Reason will go. And let those that are unconcern'd and impartial, judge what is fairly objected, what fairly answer'd, and what not. But if in these things, which concern Religion and Morality, you will give us no further Light or Answer, I may reasonably conclude, that I have not mistaken your Sense, and that I have truly calculated the Elevation of those Principles. Wherein, notwithstanding, I shall be always willing and desirous to be set right, if I have committed any Error. But let us proceed to the Matters under debate.

As to the *Immortality of the Soul*, In your Answer to the Lord Bishop of Worcester, you acknowledge the Deficiency or Limitation of your Principles as to the Proof of its Immateriality: but however, you do not freely tell us, what you make the Soul to be. You say indeed, 'tis a *Thinking Substance*; but so you say *Matter* may be made, for any thing you know. Then the Soul may be Mortal, for any thing you know, or any thing we know, by your Principles. Do you think the Soul to be a *permanent Substance*, distinct from the Body? or a *Modification* or *Power* of the Body? or *Life* only? or a certain *Influence* from without, acting in Matter so and so qualified, or in such and such Systems? Which Dispositions or Systems,

stems, when they come to be dissolved or destroy'd, that Power ceases to act there; either perishing, as a Flame when the Fewel is spent; or returning to its Fountain, whatsoever it was. This Notion seems to me to suit best to the general Air of your Discourse about the Soul, and with several particular Passages relating to

Essay, p. 44.

Pag. 68. sect.  
10.

it. As when you make Cogitation in us to be like Motion in Matter, which receives its Motion from external Impression. And when you speak about the *Sleep of the Soul*, or the Suspension of Cogitation when we sleep; the Body not being then receptive of the *Thinking Influence*. You say, the Soul hath no Extension, nor, at certain Fits, any Cogitation: What can the Soul be then, but a certain Power acting in the Body, when the Body is prepar'd for the exercise of it, and ceasing to act when the Body is indisposed? But whether that be a Superior Divine Power, distinct from Matter, as a *vis movens*; or a Power fastned, I know not how, to the Body, or upon such and such Systems of Matter: Whether, I say, of these two Suppositions better agrees with your Doctrine, I cannot certainly tell; but either of them destroys the Immortality of the Soul, upon the Dissolution of the Body.

Further-



Furthermore, this seems to be the Supposition you go upon, when you question, whether a Man *waking and sleeping* (without Thoughts) be the same Man. If there be still, *sleeping or waking*, the same Soul, the same *permanent Substance*, I see no room for that Question or Doubt which you make ; and your making of it, would induce one to believe, that it is a Difficulty that arises to you particularly, and upon that Principle, That the Soul of Man is not a *permanent and distinct Substance*, but an extrinsick or intrinsick Power, that acts or is suspended according to the Dispositions or Indispositions of the Body. Accordingly, I do not see by your Discourse, how St. Peter, suppose, at the Resurrection, will be the same Man, unless he have the same Body, or the same Organization of Parts ; tho' his Soul be the same, with the same Dispositions and Habits: Nor how our Saviour, now in Heaven, is the same Man that was crucified at *Jerusalem* ; or that He that was crucified at *Jerusalem*, is the same Man that will come again to judge the Quick and the Dead. But I do not love to walk in the dark, and therefore I refer these things to your further Explication, if you so please. Your Doctrine of the *Soul* seems to me obscure and ambiguous : Men write, I think, to be understood ;

and

P. 44, 45. &  
Lib. 2. c. 27.

Pag. 180.  
sect. 6.

and I hope I may, without offence, use the same Sentence to you, which you have used to others, *Si non vis intelligi, debes negligi*. However if you please to let us into the Secret, if there be a Secret, I shall make no other use of it than to give it a fair and free Examination.

I proceed now to another Difficulty in your Doctrine of the Soul, which I mentioned formerly. You think the Soul, when we are asleep, is without any Thoughts or Perceptions. I am still at a loss, I confess, how to frame any Idea of a *thoughtless, senseless, lifeless Soul*. This Carcase of a Soul I cannot understand: If it neither have Cogitation, nor Extension, as you suppose, what Being or manner of Being it hath, I am not able to comprehend. It must be a Substance, and a particular finite Substance, and yet without any Mode. If you say you have no Idea of it, why then do you affirm or introduce a new and unintelligible State of the Soul, whereof neither you, nor others, can have any Conception? However, you ought to tell us, how you bring the Soul out of this unintelligible State. What Cause can you assign able to produce the first Thought at the end of this Sleep and Silence, in a total Eclipse and intermission of Thinking? Upon your Supposition,  
That

That all our Thoughts perish in sound Sleep, and all Cogitation is extinct, we seem to have a new Soul every Morning. If a Flame be extinct, the same cannot return, but a new one may be made. If a Body cease to move, and come to perfect rest, the Motion it had cannot be restor'd, but a new Motion may be produc'd. If all Cogitation be extinct, all our Ideas are extinct, so far as they are Cogitations, and seated in the Soul : So we must have them new impress'd ; we are, as it were, new born, and begin the World again. If you say, the Ideas remain in the Soul, in that State of Silence and Insensibility, and need only a new Excitation ; Why then, say I, may not Infants have *innate Ideas* (which you so much oppose) that want only Objects and Occasions to excite and actuate them, with a fit disposition of the Brain ?

Sir, I am sorry my Apprehension should be so slow, or your Doctrine about the Soul so shaded and cover'd, that I cannot, without further Light, come to know your Meaning ; or, which I most desire, see how it is consistent with Reason and Nature. To gratifie your Readers with a clearer Explanation of your Principles in this Particular, seems to be a Debt due to them, which I shall take however as an

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Obligation :



Obligation : But if you be otherwise minded, for Reasons best known to your self, I shall use no further Entreaty or Importunity.

Another Head wherein I desir'd your further Explication, was in reference to *Reveal'd Religion* ; that we may see what Ground we can have upon your Principles for the Certainty of it. If we cannot in your way be assur'd of the Immortality of the Soul by the Light of Nature, or by Revelation, you leave us no certain way to know it. Now if you do not make that Revelation certain in it self, it cannot make us certain of any thing. You seem therefore the more oblig'd to give good Proof of the Certainty of *Reveal'd Religion*, by how much you make the Assurance of our Immortality to depend upon its Testimony. I told you formerly, why I thought your Principles would not reach to the Proof of a Certainty in *Reveal'd Religion* ; namely, because they do not prove, nor give us Grounds whereupon we may prove the Moral Attributes of God ; upon which, and not upon Infinite Power and Knowledge only, depends the Satisfaction and Assurance we have of the Truth of a Revelation. The Divine *Veracity* is the particular Attribute upon which it mainly depends ; and that we think may be prov'd from the Divine Perfection :

on: But you have given us no Idea of *Perfection*, unless you resolve it into *Power*; whereof indeed you have given a large Account, but that will not reach and decide the Case in question. However, I will wait your Pleasure and Leisure, to see if you are minded to give us any more Instruction in this Particular. The truth is, There is a Passage in your late *Reply to the Bishop of Worcester*, (p. 95, 96.) which would incline one to believe, That you think there is no Certainty in Reveal'd Religion, seeing you do not allow the *Certainty of Faith*, but look upon that Expression as Jargon, or next to Nonsense. To talk of the *Certainty of Faith*, say you, seems all one to me, as to talk of the *Knowledge of Believing*: A way of speaking not easie to me to understand. Faith, methinks, must either be Certain or Uncertain; and if you refuse the one, you must take the other. But this, I suppose, with what follows there, will fall under the Examination and Censure of a better Pen: I will therefore insist no more upon it.

I proceed now to the Third Head, That of *Natural Religion and Morality*. This you think is demonstrable from your Principles, *Mathematically demonstrable*. This indeed would be an happy Performance, and of great use to

Mankind. But I cannot discern from what  
 sure Foundation, or in what Method you can  
 make out this Demonstration. If you make  
 Natural Religion and Morality to depend up-  
 on *Future Rewards and Punishments*, as I think  
 you do, then they must depend upon the *Im-*  
*mortality of the Soul*; And if they depend upon  
 That, and that be only *Probable* by the Light of  
 Nature, then neither can the other by the Light  
 of Nature be *Mathematically demonstrable*.  
 I should argue thus, If Morality stands upon  
 Future Punishments and Rewards, and Future  
 Punishments and Rewards stand upon the Im-  
 mortality of the Soul, and the Immortality of  
 the Soul be only *Probable*, then Morality can-  
 not be *Mathematically demonstrable*. This is  
 something like your *Indian* Comparison. If the  
 Earth stand upon an Elephant, and the Ele-  
 phant upon a Tortoise, then what supports  
 the Tortoise?

P. 17. sect.  
5, 6.

P. 192. sect.  
5.

P. 86. sect.  
19.

P. 197. sect.  
2.

Thus far we are clear; There ought not,  
 I'm sure, be more in the Conclusion, than was  
 in the Premises. You allow, I think, a Law  
 of Nature, with or without Revelation; a na-  
 tural Conscience to distinguish Good and Evil,  
 Virtue and Vice. This is generally understood  
 by *Morality* and *Natural Religion*. And this  
*Morality*, if I understand you aright, is what  
 you



you say is *Demonstrable* by your Principles. But if you use that Word *Morality* in another sense than what is generally understood by it in common Conversation, or by Ancient and Modern Authors, you (who blame others so often for an uncertain use of Words) ought to fix and declare your peculiar Signification of that Word, that we may know your Meaning. If by *Morality* you understand the Practical Precepts of the Christian Religion, who doubts but *That* *Morality* may be known clearly and evidently? We have no need of your Mathematical Demonstration in That Case, if you mean only that you can prove *Morality* from Scripture. Besides, if that were required, you must first give us a Demonstration of the Veracity of the Revealer from your Principles, before you can demonstrate *Morality* in this Sense. But if you understand Natural *Morality*, as others do; We think, and say, you cannot give, by your Principles, a Demonstration of it.

After all, Whatsoever you understand by *Morality*, you seem to ground your Demonstration upon Future Punishments and Rewards, and upon the arbitrary Will of the Law-giver: And I do not think these the first Grounds of *Good and Evil, Vertue and Vice*. I do not think they are constituted by Punishments and Rewards,

wards, nor by the Will of God only, if you take that Will for an *Arbitrary Power*: And I'll give my Reasons for it. If things were so, there would be no fixt Notion of *Holiness*, and God might be the *Author of Sin*: I mean, of what we call Sin, and judge Sin, and for which Sinners are punisht. But in reality (according to this Principle) there is nothing Sin to this Almighty Being, nor any fixt Notion of Holiness. For if his Will be the Original Rule of Good and Evil, and that Will go by no Rule, there is no Rule of Sin to him: All things are Indifferent, till he declare *This* or *That* to be Sin, according to his Pleasure; nor is there any Rule of Sin to us, but that Revealed Pleasure. This Consequence, I believe, will be granted; admitting the Supposition. But you will say, it may be, After God hath declar'd such and such Things to be Sin, they are so, and he cannot be the Author of them. And why not, I pray? I desire to know, what binds him to his Word? to this Order or Declaration he hath made? It must be something antecedent to his Will, and, in that respect, superiour: Which if you allow, we have all we desire, An Original Standard for Sin and *Holiness*; namely, the Divine Nature and Essential Perfections: A Law from which the Divine Will can never

ver deviate; nor we, without Sin, ever transgress.

Then, on the other hand, as to *Holiness*, What Definition or Idea can you give us of it, according to this Principle? Is *Holiness* only a due Care and Concern for our Interest and Happiness, present and future? That's a good thing, and very necessary; but 'tis rather Prudence or Wisdom, than *Holiness*, in the proper Sense of the Word. Suppose then you say, *Holiness* is a Conformity to the Will of God: That also is very true; for the Divine Will is never contrary to the Divine Nature: But this is not the Original Notion of Intrinsic *Holiness*, into which 'tis ultimately resolv'd; This is not the Archetype. Intrinsic *Holiness* is a Conformity to the Divine Nature, according to our Capacities; being *like to God*, and Partakers of his Perfections, Pure as He is Pure, so far as the Measures of Humanity will permit. This, I think, is clear in Reason, and I'm sure 'tis confirm'd by good Authorities; That of Revelation, and also that of the best esteem'd Philosophers that have writ about Morality. And furthermore, How can we know (antecedently to Revelation) what the Will of God is, or what he hath appointed to be *Good* or *Evil*, Sin or *Holiness*? I say, How can you know



know this, if you do not know it from the immutable Nature of God, and the immutable Differences of *Good* and *Evil*? And there will be the same Difficulty to know or ascertain Future Punishments and Rewards, without, or with a Revelation: For tho' you have a Revelation, if there be no immovable Rules of Good and Evil, Just and Unjust; nor any fixt Rule of Right betwixt God and his Creatures, you can never be assur'd of Performance, whatsoever is promis'd or threatned. There may be a Reveal'd and a Secret Will, for any thing you know: And we may follow one, and the other be finally executed, according to a Secret Intention; which will lay a Ground for an incurable Scepticism. But I have noted before, how these Principles, upon another account, render the whole *Future State* uncertain, and therefore prosecute it no further at present.

I think you should tell us also, What is the *Love of God* (the Fountain of Vertue and Piety) according to your Principles; and how it is distinguish'd from *Self-love*: Which, in your way, it seems to be in the last Resolution of it. We love God; but why? Not for his sake, but for our own sake; because he will reward our Love and Obedience. Without this Motive, you seem to leave no Argument to love Him,

Him, or Vertue, or Piety : We may fear and admire an *Eternal, Almighty, All knowing Being* : But if he have no other Attributes, as I do not find you have prov'd any more, you lay no Foundation for the Love of God, nor for the Love of Vertue and Piety. Those Verses express my Sense in this Particular :

*Oderunt peccare Mali, formidine pœnæ :*

*Oderunt peccare Boni, virtutis amore.*

But your Principles turn the latter Verse another way ;

*Oderunt peccare Boni, mercedis amore.*

How, pray you, upon these Principles, do you preserve the Distinction (that good old Distinction, which it may be you despise) of *Bonum Utile & Honestum* ? In your way, either the Parts are coincident, or *Bonum Utile* is superior to *Bonum Honestum*. 'Tis an open and free Saying of Tully's, but was always thought to have good Sense in it, *Per spicuum est, nisi æquitas, fides, justitia, proficiantur à naturâ, & si omnia hæc ad utilitatem referantur, virum bonum non posse reperiri.* Many, you know, of our best Authors in Morality have spoken things

De fin. Bon.  
& Mal. c. 18.

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to the same sense. In like manner, the Distinction of *Positive Laws*, and *Natural or Moral Laws*, seems to be confounded, if you make both to depend upon the arbitrary Will of God. At least, these things need a further Explication, if, according to this new way, you make them both to have the same Ground and Measure.

Give me leave to add one Consideration more: As the Reasons of *Good and Evil*, so likewise of *True and False*, seem to be unstable and unsettled, according to these Principles. For, if the Difference of *True and False* be immutable, or not determin'd by the arbitrary Will of God, I see no reason why we should not make the same Judgment as to the Difference of *Good and Evil*; or why Moral Truths should not be as fixt and unalterable as any other. Let us take a Proposition in Mathematicks, and another in Morality: Suppose, in the former, *That* which is often made use of, that the Three Angles of a Triangle are equal to Two Right ones: And in Morals, that it is a wicked thing for a Man maliciously to kill his Friend, or his Father, or any innocent Person. The Truth of this seems to me as clear, eternal, and unalterable, as the other. There is a Rectitude and Obliquity in Actions, as well as in Lines, a Congruity or Incongruity. 'Tis true,  
Moral



Moral Cases are commonly more Complex, and so not so easily stated ; but in those that are Simple and General, or clearly stated, Propositions about them are as certain as other Truths. In every Moral Action or Moral Case there is a *Right* and a *Wrong*, as much as every Number is Even or Odd, or every Line Straight or Crooked. And the Relations of Moral Things seem to me as necessary, as the Relations of Figures and Numbers. I am also apt to believe, That the Differences of Good and Evil, Just and Unjust, *Turpis & Honesti*, would be as sensible to us (in Nature pure) as Physical or Mathematical Differences ; as *sweet* and *sour*, *straight* and *crooked* ; if Interest, Appetites, Passions, and Lusts did not deprave our Taste and Judgments in those Intellectual Things. Which Prejudices and brutish Inclinations take no place, you know, in Physical or Mathematical Speculations.

Sir, If you please to let us know your Grounds of Morality (Mathematically demonstrable) as plainly as I have done mine, 'tis all that I desire as to this Particular. And in all other things, I think, 'tis enough to express our Thoughts clearly, with our Reasons for them. More is not needful amongst Persons that have

no other Design than to find out Truth, by comparing the Opinions of others with their own, and weighing the Reasons on both sides. For a Man to attend to his own Thoughts and Conceptions, and the best Light he hath; not to speak by roat, and blindly follow either new or receiv'd Opinions, is so far commendable. But whether his Principles and Conclusions are just, and proportionate to the Nature of Things, is a further Question, and must be left to Time and Trial. Every Man would be willing to know the Sense of the Authors that he reads, the State of their Principles with their Consequences (especially as to Moral things) that he might make a sure Judgment of them. I am sensible that when Men have a different Set of Ideas and First Principles, they may be easily mistaken in judging of one anothers Meaning, or in drawing Consequences from one anothers Principles: But that, methinks, ought to give no offence; but rather to be gently rectified (without ill Language) by the Authors themselves, who best know their own Mind. And as I find that you say you are often at a loss in understanding the Lord Bishop of *Worcester's* Remarks upon some of your Notions, so I hope you will not think  
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it strange if I am sometimes at a loss also how to understand your Writings ; which, we may reasonably presume, are not more clear, either as to Sense or Words.

You tell me in your *Answer*, That I pretend Pag. 2. to have writ that Letter *to be inform'd* : And so I did ; but withal gave you some Reasons for my Doubts. Will you not allow a Learner to desire his Master to explain himself, when he does not understand his Dictates ? and also to propose Objections, when his Teacher's Sense seems to him contrary to Reason ? We are taught by your self, not to give up our Assent to the Authority of others, without good Evidence ; Essay, p. 405.  
sect. 17. and you make it one great Cause of Errour, To relie blindly upon the Opinions of others. I hope therefore I have obey'd your Precepts in this, as I am ready to do in all other things that are reasonable. I can truly and sincerely say, That I do not write out of any Spirit of Opposition, nor for any By-ends whatsoever ; but for my own Instruction and Satisfaction, and for the Discovery of Truth in those great Points. When I doubt of your Sense, if you please to direct me ; and when I make Objections, if you please to answer them, I have my Design ; and desire onely that the Merits of the Cause may be spoken to on either hand, without



\* No bodies without coarse Language, and Personal Reflections, which, I think, is your own Advice \*.

*Notions, I think, are the better or truer, for ill-manners*  
 joined with them; and I conclude, your Lordship, who so well knows the different Cast of Mens Heads, and of the Opinions that possess them, will not think it ill Manners in any one, if his Notions differ from your Lordship's, and that he owns that Difference, and explains the Grounds of it as well as he can: I have always thought, that Truth and Knowledge, by the ill and over-eager Management of Controversies, lose a great deal of the Advantages they might receive from the Variety of Conceptions there is in Mens Understandings. Could the Heats, and Passions, and ill Language be left out of them, they would afford great Improvements to those who could separate them from By-interests and Personal Prejudices. Answer to the Bishop of Worcester, p. 222.

In your Conclusion you tell me again of my Fault, in not setting my Name to my Paper, in these hard Words; To conclude, Were there nothing else in it, I should not think it fit to trouble my self about the Questions of a Man, which he himself does not think worthy owning. To which I answer, Tho' in some Cases I think the Sense is more impartially consider'd (without Favour or Prejudice) when the Author is unknown; yet if that will satisfy you, Do you put your Name to all the Books and Pamphlets you have writ, and I will put my Name to this; how unusual soever it is, to put a Name to such small Papers.

S I R,

Your Humble Servant.

F I N I S.

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A  
VINDICATION  
Of the  
STAGE, &c.

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